Australian Bureau of Statistics

6222.0 - Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia, Jul 1998

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Age, competition and lack of skills main barriers for job seekers

In July 1998, unemployed people reported that being considered too young or too old by employers (16%), too many applicants for available jobs (14%), or lack of necessary skills or education (11%) were the main barriers to finding work, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Results from the survey **Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia** show there were 696,400 unemployed people in July 1998, the majority (82%) of whom were searching for full-time work.

Young unemployed people (those aged 15-24 years) accounted for over a third (36%) of the unemployed. Of this group, 16% reported that having insufficient work experience was a major barrier to finding work. A further 15% reported that too many applicants for available jobs was their main difficulty.

In July 1998, 40% of unemployed people were female. Unemployed females reported being considered too young or too old by employers (16%) and too many applicants for available jobs (14%) as the main difficulties they experienced in finding work.

The survey showed that almost two-thirds (64%) of unemployed people did not have post-school qualifications. However for 16% of unemployed people with post-school qualifications, and 17% of those without, being considered too young or too old by employers was the most commonly reported barrier to finding work irrespective of educational attainment.

Unemployed people who had not completed the highest level of secondary school were generally unemployed for longer than those who had. Those who had completed this level had an average duration of unemployment of 46 weeks, compared with 71 weeks for those who had not.

Other survey findings show that 96% of unemployed people contacted prospective employers when seeking work. Almost three quarters of these (73%) were also registered with Centrelink or the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES). Of those seeking full-time work, 82% were registered with Centrelink or the CES.

During the reference period of this survey, the 12 months to July 1998, the Government made significant changes to the manner in which it provided employment services to the community. Estimates relating to active steps taken to find work in this period may not be directly comparable with those from previous periods and should be used with caution. Further information about the changes to employment service arrangements can be found in the publication.

Copies of the publication **Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia, July 1998** (cat. no. 6222.0) are available from ABS Bookshops. A summary of the publication may be found on this site.

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